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667 554 had been placed in responsible positions proves what I have said about the selection and rise of slave officials at the court of Bida.

Slave Ranks

Title	*Tribal origin*	*Present office*	*Biographical remarks*
Gabi Seidi	Kupa	'Officer of Liaison' between *Etsu* and District Officer	A rich slave who under *Etsu* Bello bought his title for £16.
Ndatwaki	Yagba	On the Bida Town Council	Father was *Ndatwaki* under *Etsu* Maliki; he himself received the same title under *Etsu* Bello.
Dzwodfu	,,	,, ,,	An hereditary slave title, first granted under *Etsu* Usman.
Ndamáraki	Bunu	,, ,,	Father was *Ndamáraki* under *Etsu* Masaba.
Sántali	Benu-Nupe	..	Grandfather was a slave of Usman Zaki; they remained slaves of this house.
Masántali	Yagba	..	Grandfather was a slave of *Etsu* Umaru Majigi; they remained slaves of this house.
Swajiyd'tsu	,,	..	Father held same slave rank.
Ndatódo	,,	..	Father held the same title and also title of *Ndamáraki*.
Manfáda	,,	..	Another slave title which has become hereditary in one house.
Sonmdźi	Kusopa-Nupe	..	Id.
Ndádari	Nupe	..	Id.
Shangbo	Nupe from Rabá	..	Father was a *saraki* (*Somasii*) of *Etsu* Majiya. He was made prisoner in the war and became a slave of *Etsu* Masaba.
(*Sarkin Dogari*	Hausa	Head of police force	To-day not regarded as slave title. Formerly bestowed on a personal slave of the ruling king.)

WAR

124 721 It will be understood that this description is based entirely on information and the historical recollections of informants. However, the wars that were fought in Nupe and by the Nupe are not so far distant that there are no longer eyewitnesses left, or people who have themselves borne arms in these wars. Thus information could be checked and cross-checked. For certain details I could, moreover, count on most authoritative informants, who had played a leading part in the last wars of the kingdom; the description of the military organization, for example, is based on information obtained from the late commander of the *élite* troops of Nupe, the king's bodyguard.

721 669 War was essentially a concern of the Nupe state. No warfare or organized fights occurred between the villages or tribal sections of the

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country.[1] But villages and tribal sections were frequently involved in the wars of the kingdom, either themselves causing wars by rebelling against the central government, or being forced to take sides in the wars which the kingdom waged against other groups. Thus the Beni and Gbedegi sided with Bida against the rebellious Kusopa, and again in the Kyedye war, while other tribal sections, such as the riverain Bataci, Kupa, and Ebagi, came to the aid of the Kyedye. In the later times of the kingdom, to which my records chiefly refer, the wars were indeed largely caused by internal disturbances and were directed against rebellious provinces or feudal lords—being reconquests rather than conquests. Historical records mention ten major wars in the thirty years that preceded the British conquest, between 1864 and 1895. Most of these wars are still vividly remembered, and old men would even recall characteristic incidents in the various campaigns. My informants, not unnaturally, greatly extolled the soldierly virtues of the Nupe people. But there is also Barth's testimony that the Nupe army, especially the cavalry, was well known in the Hausa states.[2] Twice, in fact, (in 1880) the Nupe were called to Hausa to help their allies, the Emirs of Kontagora and Gwandu, to put down rebellions in their countries.

The Nupe army was comparatively loosely organized. It possessed only a small nucleus of regular troops, represented in the king's bodyguard; the rest of the army consisted of levies of slaves, volunteers, and mercenary soldiers, raised by the houses of the feudal nobility. But these household troops, too, were largely composed of trained and experienced soldiers.

The king's bodyguard comprised both infantry and cavalry. The foot-soldiers, called *dogari nya dakári* (i.e. 'guards on foot'), were equipped with guns or bows and arrows, and were under the command of the *Etsu Dogari*. The troops who carried guns were mostly slaves, the sons of slaves from the king's household, the others were free men, mercenary soldiers—among them many foreigners, from Hausa, Bornu, and Yoruba—who had taken service under the *Etsu* Nupe. Under *Etsu* Maliki this royal bodyguard numbered 80 men. The royal horse troops, a slightly larger group, were called *lefidi*, after the cotton-wool armour which they wore. Their weapons were swords, spears, and big leather shields. They were commanded by the *Etsu Lefidi* (who was also called *Zarmi*). One of my informants for the present description was the *Etsu Lefidi* of the royal house of Usman Zaki. He was of Hausa origin, a freed slave and the son of an *Etsu Lefidi* who had served under Usman Zaki himself. The horse troops were composed again of slaves and mercenary soldiers. The slaves who served in the royal cavalry were the sons of titled slaves, every court slave of rank having to send one of his sons into the *Etsu*'s bodyguard, and the volunteers were all foreigners. In the reign of *Etsu* Maliki the *lefidi* numbered 100 men.

The troops which were contributed by the various houses of the

[1] The only exception was the warlike Kyedye sub-tribe.

[2] Barth, op. cit. iv, p. 545. Lander reports that Mallam Dendo could 'command 1,000 horsemen, well equipped, and an uncountable number of foot-soldiers' (op. cit. ii, p. 296).

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642 But to 'reach' and to 'control' means often wholesale exploitation rather than protection and security. Here the fundamental weakness of
661 a sovereignty in which political control is vested corporately in a ruling group, the members of which are entrusted severally with executive
669 power, is clearly revealed. In other words, in the employment of the political machinery the aspect of duty towards the state is not invariably harmonized with the aspect of class privilege Thus the peace of the country was often disturbed by the rulers themselves: one feudal lord breaking into the territory of another, levying illegal taxes; a royal messenger misappropriating tributes which he was to collect for his royal master; or a royal prince raiding on his own the countries which had paid their tribute and thus bought their claim to the 'king's peace'. King and notables alike would rally against the man who thus betrayed his loyalty to the kingdom. Punitive expeditions, loss of office, and heavy punishment were the reward of those who broke the 'king's peace' and committed what the Nupe call *cin amana* (see p. 110).

642 Revolts were quelled, raids answered with raids, war fought with war, and the 'king's peace' eventually re-established. But under conditions like this, protection and public security could be, at the best, only very unequal and unstable. The stress and tension of the system revealed itself in the various attempts on the part of the peoples of Nupe to secure better safeguards for their civic rights. Direct rebellion was the crudest, and, in fact, least efficient, weapon. Siding with one feudal lord against another, with pretenders against the ruling king, and princes against their royal overlord, meant obtaining, if not permanent security, the promise of protection and favours. Villages and districts could not choose their overlords or feudal delegates: but there are one or two indications that they could change their political status. Thus the villages of Sakpe and Kutigi claim that they obtained under *Etsu* Masaba, in return for heavier taxation, the legal franchise normally granted only to royal domains. I have mentioned the frequent efforts of the Kyedye to secure a semi-autonomous position. The Kusopa of Laboži, taking advantage of their exceptional economic position as the kola-nut planters of the kingdom, were also able to secure from *Etsu* Masaba the status of a royal domain equal to that of Beni and Kyedye.

PATRONAGE AND CLIENTSHIP

641 The privileges granted by one *Etsu* could be abolished by another. Security granted by charter could be infringed by powerful feudal lords.
566 Where the group as such, village, or district, failed to obtain permanent
675 security, individuals could seek protection of a different order: the declaration of voluntary allegiance to a feudal lord or an influential man in the capital bought his and his family's friendship and personal protection. This allegiance, which often went hand in hand with the voluntary adoption of Mohammedanism, would be initiated as a rule by

commands to the inert masses of the population in any other way' (P. Vinogradoff, in *Cambridge Medieval History*, i, p. 653).

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Kede

634 measure of independence in taxation, jurisdiction, and political management in general.[1]

634 669 In this connexion, we must point out an important development in the history of Nupe kingdom, which in turn greatly affected Kede history. The royal dynasty of Nupe, which traced its origin back to the mythical Tsoede, was in power till the earlier half of last century, when Nupe kingdom, like most of the Native states in Northern Nigeria, fell under the rule of Emirs of Fulani stock who had conquered the country and deposed the indigenous kings. We have no data on the relation between Kede autonomy and the Nupe State under the old dynasty. But it is certain that under Fulani rule conflicts constantly arose, partly perhaps because the Kede (like many other Nupe sections) resented the alien rule, but to a large extent certainly because the Fulani kings, much more than the Nupe rulers before them, had to curb in their own interest the autonomous leanings of their Kede vassals. The Fulani, whose wars at that time were directed chiefly against tribes in the south, could not afford to let an all too independent section control the river—the southern boundary and at the same time the vital artery of trade and traffic of the country. Slave trade, the economic mainstay of the pre-British rulers of central Nigeria, traffic in arms and powder, and troop transports for their military expeditions, all had to cross the River Niger on Kede territory.[2] The Fulani overlords enforced their sovereignty in a number of wars and punitive expeditions, in the course of which (if the reports are true) hundreds were killed, thousands of Kede sold as slaves by the victorious Fulani, Kede notables executed in Bida, and whole districts of Kede country devastated. A typical instance is the Katcha War—the answer of the Fulani to the first attempt of

174 697 [1] There exists certain evidence to show that the Kede chiefs succeeded in enlarging their judicial power at the cost of their overlords and usurped a certain judicial machinery of the Nupe State which had evolved in the river area. To-day, at any rate, the Kede claim that this judicial machinery was under the authority of the *Kuta*, while other, non-Kede, informants state that it represented entirely a prerogative of the kings of Nupe. I am referring to the *Ledu* (lit. prison) villages on the banks of the Niger, which were so called because they served as prisons and places of execution for criminals convicted, by the king's court, of a 'crime of the king'. I have described this system and the attempts of the Kede to claim it as their own in *Man* (1935), 143.

[2] The importance, for example, of Raba as a river port for slave traffic to the south is pointed out by Lander (*Journal of an Expedition* (1832), ii, p. 298). Laird and Oldfield speak of 600 Kede canoes, 'all of which may be employed for Ful troops to cross the Niger on war expeditions' (op. cit., ii, p. 315).

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the Kede to force the tributary of the Niger on which Katcha is situated and to occupy the town. The people of Katcha, under allegiance to Bida, claimed protection for their territorial rights from the central government. The Kede were routed by a Fulani army, and the political rights of the Katcha people restored.[1]

The feud between the Kede and the Emirs of Bida, and, above all, the strategic position in the defence of the kingdom which the river tribe occupied, was utilized in the Royal Niger Company campaign against Bida in 1897. With promises of political autonomy to the tribe and the chieftainship to the ambitious nephew of the ruling *Kuta*, Sir William Wallace, the commanding officer of the Niger Company troops, secured the support of the Kede. Their canoe fleet was placed under the command of a gunboat and massed on the river south of Bida; with their help, the relieving force of the Nupe, which at the time was engaged in a war in the south, was cut off and Bida captured. The Kede received the promised reward and were granted semi-autonomy, being made responsible directly to the British Administration instead of to their former overlords, the Emirs of Bida.

The political status of the Kede was later changed again. The *Kuta* lost a considerable portion of his territory when the new provinces and divisions were mapped out (1900–1905). At the same time, his autonomous position was curtailed, and Kede country placed again under Bida. A last element of autonomy is preserved in the regulation that the District Headship of Kede District should remain vested in the Kede chief.

The adoption of this curtailed autonomy for the purposes of modern government has not been an unqualified success. Administrative officers have had cause to complain of the declining authority of the Kede chief. The more evident supports of Kede chieftainship—the dynastic title, the privileged economic position of the chief (a comparatively high salary having taken the place of the former share in taxes and tributes), and his control over the officials of his State—have not been affected so fundamentally

[1] This first attempt was carried out in the early days of the Royal Niger Company. The second, successful, attempt of the Kede to gain a foothold in the Katcha River was carried out under an administration favourably disposed towards Kede expansion, and led to the peaceful occupation of the riverside at Katcha mentioned previously. This 'peaceful penetration', however, is hardly less resented by the Katcha people, who have lost through it their formerly undisturbed fishing grounds.